

EXTENSION OF LEGATION GROUNDS, PEKIN, CHINA.

L E T T E R

FROM

THE ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE,

TRANSMITTING

COPY OF A DISPATCH FROM THE MINISTER IN CHINA ON THE
PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE LEGATION GROUNDS AT PEKIN.

JANUARY 11, 1901.—Referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to
be printed.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, January 11, 1901.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith for your information a copy of a dispatch from the minister of the United States in China, Hon. E. H. Conger, on the proposed extension of the legation grounds at Pekin. The necessity for this is apparent and prompt action most desirable.

I have, therefore, to earnestly request that a sum (estimated) at \$100,000 be provided by the present session of Congress, to be immediately available, for the purchase of land and the erection thereon of suitable buildings to be used for the legation of the United States in Pekin.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

DAVID J. HILL,
Acting Secretary.

Hon. HENRY CABOT LODGE,
*Acting Chairman Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate.*

No. 438.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Pekin, China, November 3, 1900.

SIR: I have the honor to report that, in view of the probability of keeping large legation grounds in the future and because of the general desire on the part of all the European representatives to have extensive legations, all of the ministers are taking possession of con-

siderable areas adjoining their legations—property belonging either to the Chinese Government or to private citizens, and having been abandoned by the owners during the siege—with the intention to claim them as conquest, or possibly credit something for them on their account for indemnity.

I have as yet not taken formal possession of any ground for this purpose, nor shall I without instructions; but I shall not, for the present, permit any of the owners or other persons to reoccupy any of the property between this legation and the canal to the east of it. While this area will be very small in comparison with the other legations, yet it will be sufficient to make both the legation personnel and the guard very comfortable, and will better comport with our traditional simplicity vis-a-vis the usual magnificence of other representatives.

It is proposed to designate the boundaries of a legation quarter, which shall include all the legations, and then demand the right to put that in a state of defense when necessary, and to prohibit the residence of Chinese there, except by permission of the ministers. If, therefore, these ideas as to guards, defense, etc., are to be carried out, a larger legation will be an absolute necessity. In fact, it is impossible now to accommodate the legation and staff in our present quarters without most inconvenient crowding.

There are no public properties inside the legation quarter which we could take as a legation. All the proposed property to be added, as above mentioned, to our legation is private ground, except a very small temple in the southeast corner, and, I presume, under our policy, if taken will be paid for, either to the Chinese owners or credited upon account against the Chinese Government for indemnity, although I suspect most of the other governments will take theirs as a species of conquest.

The plat of ground adjoining and lying to the east of the legation, to which I have made reference, is about the size of the premises now occupied by us.

I shall be glad to receive such instructions as you may be pleased to give.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

E. H. CONGER.

Hon. JOHN HAY,

Secretary of State, Washington, D. C.

[Abstract from letter of Hon. W. W. Rockhill, dated November 20, 1900, to Senator Lodge.]

Conger has written to the Department and I have written to the Secretary suggesting the urgent need of securing at present a good site for our legation here. All the other powers have already pre-empted large tracts in the Tartar City here, on which they expect to build. If we do not do something *at once* we will find ourselves shut off permanently from getting what we should have, a respectable legation worthy of us and commensurate with our interests out here. If Congress would appropriate \$100,000 we could secure all the necessary land and build all the needed buildings for the legation and for the guard, which must remain here, probably for years to come. * * * A year from now and it will be too late. It is, without any exaggeration, now or never.